

world celebrates Eid al-Fitr, we may also celebrate the revival of our hopes for peace throughout the world.

Ramadan Kareem.

NOTE: The address was videotaped at approximately 11:15 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room for later broadcast on the Department of State American Embassy Television Network. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this address.

Statement on the Death of David Hermelin

November 22, 2000

Hillary and I are deeply saddened to learn of the death of our good friend Ambassador David Hermelin.

All of us who knew David admired him deeply for his remarkable combination of energy, wit, optimism, and commitment to family, faith, and the common good. From the businesses he built to the charities he supported to the causes he championed, David demonstrated the qualities of active citizenship which have made our country the greatest democracy in history. He was a magnificent man. I will be forever grateful for his friendship, support, and outstanding service as our Ambassador to Norway. With characteristic energy, he made impressive contributions to U.S.-Norway relations, something I saw firsthand when he persuaded me to make the first-ever visit to Norway by a sitting U.S. President in November of 1999. I will miss him very much.

Hillary and I extend our condolences to his wife, Doreen, their children, and grandchildren.

Statement on Signing the District of Columbia Appropriations Act, 2001

November 22, 2000

Today I am signing into law H.R. 5633, the "District of Columbia Appropriations Act, 2001."

I commend the House and Senate for passing a version of the District of Columbia appropriations bill that I can sign. I am pleased that the Majority and Minority were

able to come together on this legislation under the leadership of Representative Eleanor Holmes Norton, the District's stalwart champion. While I continue to object to the riders in the enrolled bill, some of the most highly objectionable provisions that would have intruded upon D.C. citizens' right to make decisions about local matters have been deleted or modified from previous versions of the bill. This bill is a fair compromise.

I commend the Congress for providing virtually all of the Federal funds I requested for the District of Columbia. The bill includes essential funding for Courts, Corrections, and the Offender Supervision Agency, and for the tuition assistance program for District of Columbia residents. The bill fully funds the New York Avenue Metro station and provides a start on funding for brownfields remediation and economic development in Anacostia.

I continue to object to remaining riders that violate the principle of home rule, including, but not limited to, provisions infringing on voting rights, HIV/AIDS prevention, abortion, implementation of the Domestic Partners Act, special education, and the Mayor's personnel authorities.

The Act also includes troubling provisions with regard to needle exchange programs in the District. While I am pleased that it does not prohibit private entities from using their own funds for needle exchange programs, the Act does retain a ban on local funds for that purpose, an infringement of "home rule." Even more objectionable is the language that prohibits the exchange of needles in large portions of the city. In the form in which it passed the House, this language would have had the practical effect of ending needle exchange programs in the District of Columbia. My Administration worked hard to remove this language from the final bill, and we appreciate the work of the conferees to make this provision less harmful and allow for those conducting needle exchange programs to adapt and continue operation. However, even though the language has been improved upon, these provisions are an encroachment on the District's prerogatives, create an unnecessary burden on the District, and could seriously disrupt current HIV prevention efforts.